

# Governor Carney, DTI Announce Rural Broadband Expansion Partnership

## *Partnership with Bloosurf aims to eliminate broadband deserts in Kent and Sussex Counties*

**DOVER, Del.** – The Delaware Department of Technology and Information (DTI) Chief Information Officer James Collins, joined by Bloosurf, LLC Founder and CEO Vincent Sabathier and his team, announced a partnership to provide affordable wireless broadband in targeted, rural areas of Kent and Sussex Counties.

Last July, Governor John Carney and DTI issued a Request for Proposals to provide wireless broadband internet service to unserved and underserved residents and businesses in rural areas, and set a goal to eliminate broadband deserts in those regions within 24 months. DTI estimates target areas include approximately 127,700 homes and businesses in the rural parts of Sussex and Kent Counties. DTI will provide funding for startup costs of approximately \$2 million to design, build, operate and commercialize a wireless network. DTI has placed prioritization on low-cost services for low-income families to enable them to take full advantage of the internet.

*“Delawareans use the internet every day to search for jobs, acquire new skills, help their children do their homework, and run their businesses,” said **Governor Carney**. “High-speed broadband connectivity is essential for all Delaware families to succeed in today’s economy. This initiative will connect Delawareans in rural areas that have long been underserved by high-speed internet service – or not served at all. We are*

*pleased to be moving forward with this partnership, and look forward to additional progress."*

"Technology is a part of nearly everything we do, making access to broadband as necessary as other public utilities in order for our state to thrive," said **CIO James Collins**. "Without it, kids can't do their homework and businesses are unable to operate effectively in the information age. The Carney Administration has made it a priority to bridge both the accessibility and affordability gaps of high-speed broadband to ensure that all Delawareans benefit from the unprecedented access to information and collaboration technology affords."

"Bloosurf is honored to join forces with the State of Delaware and DTI in the important fight against the digital divide," said **Bloosurf CEO Vincent Sabathier**. "Bloosurf will leverage DTI funding, DivComm towers, its know-how, its assets and its strategic partnerships to design, deploy and operate a LTE-advanced network. This network will significantly enhance coverage and speed in rural areas. We will also work closely with the State to make this new service affordable to low-income families."

The first phase of Delaware's broadband efforts focused on increasing fiber infrastructure. The state's initial financial contribution of about \$1.5 million resulted in over \$30 million in private investment and 700 miles of fiber. Delaware's broadband "backbone" features high capacity fiber-optic lines that run the length of the state from Wilmington to Georgetown, and from Seaford to Lewes, improving internet reliability for consumers and increasing internet access speeds by as much as 10 times since 2009. This current phase of the project is focused on fixed wireless solutions provided by public-private partnership opportunities to capitalize on the strengths of the both sectors to address gaps in broadband availability throughout Delaware.

For more information about Delaware's broadband expansion efforts, please visit [dti.delaware.gov](http://dti.delaware.gov).

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